

Senate Resolution 1043

By: Senators Hill of the 32nd, Johnson of the 1st, Thomas of the 2nd, Pearson of the 51st and Mullis of the 53rd

A RESOLUTION

1 Expressing support for the Port of Savannah; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, as one of the primary forces helping to drive one of the nation's fastest growing
3 economies, the success of Port of Savannah is testimony to the Georgia Ports Authority's
4 trusted relationship as a strategic partner in our customers' logistics pipeline and site
5 selection process; and

6 WHEREAS, from manufacturing to large scale retail import distribution centers, Georgia is
7 riding a wave of success in attracting business and expanding trade opportunities that have
8 a direct impact on companies and communities across 159 counties; and

9 WHEREAS, beyond traditional services offered to the port industry, the Georgia Ports
10 Authority and the Port of Savannah maintain an economic development department that
11 provides an array of services with a common objective to grow business via Georgia's ports
12 while at the same time further stimulating economic growth in every corner of the state; and

13 WHEREAS, whether the goal is attracting new companies to Georgia, promoting a vast
14 inventory of site options for port-related business, assisting with tax incentives, expanding
15 existing business, assisting with export and import opportunities, or applying a vast
16 knowledge of international trade and transportation to meet the needs of its customers, the
17 Port of Savannah is creating opportunities for customers and Georgians alike; and

18 WHEREAS, together with the state's "pro-port, pro-business" philosophy, the key to the
19 Georgia Ports Authority's ongoing success is its proven ability to think outside the gates and
20 beyond the berth; and

21 WHEREAS, the Port of Savannah has assisted hundreds of companies in and around
22 Georgia's ports to gain access to 70 percent of the U.S. population; and

1 WHEREAS, in recent years, the Georgia Ports Authority has entered into partnerships with
2 selected ports around the world, including the ports of Shanghai, China; Shimizu, Japan;
3 Sydney, Australia; and the Panama Canal Authority; and

4 WHEREAS, port partnerships are one tool that the Port of Savannah uses to reach out to its
5 customers and provides access to that port's hinterland, such as Shanghai's rapidly growing
6 Yangtze River region; and

7 WHEREAS, the partnership with the Shanghai International Port Group was signed in
8 Savannah on October 11, 2005, enabling both ports to jointly promote all-water shipping
9 routes between Shanghai and Savannah and to improve services for their customers as well
10 as enabling both ports to share information and expertise in the areas of marketing,
11 information technology, engineering, and operations; and

12 WHEREAS, on November 9, 1983, representatives of the Port of Savannah and the Port of
13 Shimizu, located in Shimizu City, Japan, signed a proclamation to promote the growth and
14 development of the respective ports through the exchanging of information related to port
15 management and administration; and

16 WHEREAS, on March 12, 1996, the Georgia Ports Authority and the Sydney Ports
17 Corporation formed a partnership to promote friendship and increase trade between the ports
18 of Georgia and Sydney; and

19 WHEREAS, on June 20, 2003, the Panama Canal Authority and the Georgia Ports Authority
20 signed an agreement to allow both agencies to jointly promote all-weather shipping routes
21 between Asia and the Port of Savannah; and

22 WHEREAS, China is a top destination for Georgia exports, totaling over \$979 million with
23 top exports, including paper, food products, minerals, ore, nonmetallic mineral products,
24 forestry products, textiles, and textile mill products; and

25 WHEREAS, Georgia imports over \$8.2 billion from China through the Savannah Customs
26 district with top imports including industrial and electrical machinery, furniture, toys, games,
27 iron and steel products, and plastics; and

28 WHEREAS, two-way trade to and from China flowing through Georgia's ports of Atlanta,
29 Brunswick, and Savannah total over \$12 billion, ranking Georgia as the sixth largest port in

1 the United States for imports and exports with China and the second largest port on the East
2 Coast; and

3 WHEREAS, Savannah ranks sixth among United States container ports in Asian imports and
4 ranks second among U.S. East Coast ports in imports from China with 65 percent of all Asian
5 based cargo transiting into the U.S. South Atlantic through Savannah; and

6 WHEREAS, Georgia's deepwater ports impact over 286,000 employees throughout the state
7 and account for \$24.8 billion in gross state product, which is 6 percent of Georgia's total
8 gross state product, and contribute approximately \$3.5 billion in federal tax receipts annually;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, these impacts risk being lost if the Port of Savannah is not deepened to
11 accommodate the larger, deep-draft container ships of today and those that are on the
12 immediate horizon; and

13 WHEREAS, as the second largest port on the East Coast and the fastest growing in the
14 nation, Savannah is responsible for moving over 16 percent of the East Coast's overseas
15 container cargo; and

16 WHEREAS, the Port of Savannah serves the entire United States and not just Georgia with
17 more than 20,957 companies headquartered throughout all 50 states utilizing the Georgia
18 Ports Authority facilities in Savannah; and

19 WHEREAS, by 2014, the Panama Canal Authority will complete the deepening and
20 widening of its infrastructure and will open up the East Coast to significantly deeper draft
21 vessels increasing efficiencies and reducing costs and emissions for Georgia shippers, and
22 the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project is on schedule to be completed prior to the
23 expansion of the Panama Canal; and

24 WHEREAS, a deeper channel in Savannah will be a benefit for all United States businesses;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, indications are that the final cost-to-benefit ratio for the Savannah Harbor
27 Expansion Project, which is due by early 2008, will prove it to be significantly beneficial to
28 the United States.

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
2 hereby recognize the importance of the Port of Savannah to economic development and the
3 creation of jobs throughout both Georgia and the Southeast.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body urge President George W.
5 Bush to support the expansion project at Savannah which includes deepening the harbor from
6 its current 42 feet to 48 feet to allow for larger cargo ships to dock there.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that although the members of this body appreciate President
8 Georgia W. Bush's decision to provide \$700,000.00 for planning and design work for this
9 project, this body urges in the strongest terms possible that he include an appropriate amount
10 of appropriations for the construction projects associated with the expansion.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body congratulate the work of the
12 Georgia congressional delegation on the Savannah expansion project and recognize their
13 efforts on behalf of Georgia and encourage them to work without pause on this effort.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
15 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to President George W. Bush and Secretary
16 of Transportation Mary Peters.